

SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...



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10¢

PIRACY



SEA FOOD

THEY WERE PIRATES AND THEY'D PROWLED THE TOSSENG ATLANTIC FROM BARBADOS TO HATTARAS, EAGER TO PLY THEIR MURDEROUS, PLUNDERING PROFESSION TO WHATEVER UNFORTUNATE VESSEL MIGHT CROSS THEIR PATH. THEIR SHIP WAS A THREE-MASTED DARK, CAPTURED AND COMMANDERED FOR THEIR OWN USE IN A BLOODY BATTLE SOME SEVEN MONTHS BEFORE. HER DECKS WERE LITTER-STREWN AND STAINED WITH LIQUOR AND BLOOD. HER PAINT WAS WEATHER-SCARRED AND PEELING, FOR THERE WAS NO POINT IN MAINTAINING HER. THERE WOULD BE OTHER SHIPS WHEN SHE'D OUTLIVED HER USEFULNESS. HER HOLD WAS FILLED WITH GOLD AND SILDS AND JEWELS AND A MYRIAD OF ASSORTED BOOTS. HER MIDDIE CONGED WITH THE LUSTY LAUGHTER AND CURSES AND SINGING OF HER BLOODTHIRSTY CREW. SHE WAS HEADED TOWARD NEW PROVIDENCE, THE PIRATE STRONG-HOLD IN THE BAHAMAS, HER PIRATE CAPTAIN BESIDE HER HELM, SURVEYING HIS OCEAN-GONE REBEL DOMAIN. HIS CELEBRATING CUT-THROAT BANGS, IN NEW PROVIDENCE, THEIR BOOTS WOULD BE SOLD, THE PROCEEDS DIVIDED, AND AFTER THE CREW HAD SPENT THEIR SHARES IN WINE AND WOMEN AND REVELRY, THEY WOULD BE OFF AGAIN ON ANOTHER PROWLING EXPEDITION, BUT NOW A CRY CAME FROM MASTHEAD...



THE SHRIEK AND LAUGHTER DIED AND ALL EYES TURNED TOWARD THE TWO-MASTED BRIG ON THE DISTANT HORIZON. CAPTAIN BENJAMIN MEDFORD LIFTED HIS EYEGLASS. . .



"TIS A MERCHANT, ALL RIGHT, M'HEARTIES. RIDING LOW ON HER WATERLINE. SHE'S LAGGED DOWN WHAT SAY? DO WE TAKE HER OR HAVE WE ENOUGH?"

LET'S TAKE HER!

AYE! I'LL WEAR A BIG-GER SHARE FOR EVERY-ONE

THE LARGER PIRATE CREW LEAPED INTO THE RIGGING AND SCORPIED ALOFT, UNHOUSING THE STUDDING SAIL BOOMS ON THE FORE AND MAIN MASTS. THE STOPS WERE HOISTED ALOFT TO THE YARDS AND SOON THEY WERE SET FLIGHT. . .



SHEET THAT TOP STUB HOME, MEN! TIGHTEN UP THE TACKS! AYE... NOW WE'RE ON OUR WAY

NOW, TERRIFIED BY THE SHAGGED SAIL AND CROSS-BONE FLAG, THE MORE MANEUVERABLE DUTCH BRIG HOVE TO, ATTEMPTING TO AVOID AND OUTPACE THE FASTER AND LARGER DARK. THE PIRATE CAPTAIN STUDIED THE SYMMETRY AND BALANCE AND GRACE OF THE VESSEL.



STAND BY WITH GRAPPLING HOOKS, LADS! SHE'S A FINE SHIP. SHE'LL BRING A GOOD PRICE AT NEW PROVIDENCE!

THE PIRATE CAPTAIN HESITATED, THEN SMILED AND SHOUTED.



BIGGER SHARES IT IS, THEN! WE'LL OVERTAKE HER! LAZ ALOFT, LADS, AND OUT STUDDING SAILS!

THE PIRATE DARK WITH THE EXTRA SAIL, CATCHING THE WIND COMING FROM DEAD AFT, SORE DOWN UPON THE SMALLER BRIGANTINE. . .



THE SEEDS UP!

RUN UP THE JOLLY ROBERT! LOAD AND PRIME THE CANNONS. STAND BY TO FIRE!

IT WAS A FOOLISH MANUEVER FOR THE DOOMED DUTCH MERCHANT. THE SAILS SPILLED THEIR WIND AND SHE FLOUNDERED MOMENTARILY, GIVING THE PIRATE DARK TIME TO PULL ALONGSIDE. . .



STAND BY TO BOARD! TAKE NO MAN ALIVE! ALL WE WANT IS THE SHIP AND ITS CARGO...

NOW TIMBER-BOARDS AGAINST TIMBER AND MASTS SHOOK AND STAYS SWAGGERED AS THE TWO VESSELS RAMMED TOGETHER. GRAPPLING HOOKS WERE FLUNG FROM THE PIRATE SHIP TO THE MERCHANT'S DECK, HOLDING THE TWO SHIPS FAST. CAPTAIN MEDFORD LEAPED TO THE GUNWALE, A PISTOL IN ONE HAND, A CUTLASS IN THE OTHER.



CAPTAIN MEDFORD'S ANSWER CAME AS A DECK-BOY RAN PAST HIS ARM AND BURIED ITSELF IN THE CHEST OF HIS SECOND-IN-COMMAND, GOREBLY TALE...



THE PIRATE CREW FOLLOWED THEIR LEADER AS HE LEAPED TO THE DECK OF THE DUTCH SHIP, SCREAMING CURSES AND PROFANITIES. THE VALIANT DUTCH CREW



BUT THE ODDS WERE HOPELESSLY AGAINST THEM. WHEN THE BATTLE WAS OVER, THE SHIP'S POLISHED DECKS WERE STREWN WITH DEAD MEN...



THE UNFORTUNATE WHO'D REMAINED TO SEE ALEWAS FORCED TO WALK THE PLANK...



AND SO, NOT A SINGLE MEMBER OF THE MERCHANT SHIP'S CREW WAS LEFT ALIVE TO TELL OF THE FIDELUS ATTACK. NOW THE PIRATE CAPTAIN PLUNKED AN ORDER.



BUCKWOLD AND MILLSON!
FOR TEN MEN TO MAN THIS
SHIP AND WE'LL TAKE HER TO
NEW PROVIDENCE! THE REST
BACK ON BOARD THE...

HOLD ON,
CAP'N!

ANENT MILLSON WHANGED ACROSS THE BLOODY-STAINED DECK AND STOOD BEFORE HIS PIRATE LEADER, HIS FACE GRIM.



OUR SHIP IS LOADED WITH
GODDY THAT J AND THE
OTHERS YOU WANT TO MAN
THIS VESSEL HAVE A SHAKEN.

THAT'S RIGHT,
MILLSON. WHAT
ABOUT IT?



TWELVE LESS CUTS
IN THE PIE MARKS FOR
BIGGER PIECES
FOR THE REST...

ARE YOU
IMMORTAL -
LIVE?



I'M NOT IMAGINATING
ANYTHING, CAP'N!
I JUST DON'T LIKE
THE IDEA OF LEAVING
MY SHARE AND
RISKING THE POSSI-
BILITY OF, SAY,
ACCIDENTALLY
LOSING YOU
SOME NIGHT!



BLAST YOU,
MILLSON! I
WANT TO
JOIN YOU
THOUGH
FOR THAT!
WHAT DO YOU
SUGGEST?



TRANSFER THIS
SHIP'S CARGO TO
OUR VESSEL AND
TAKE HER IN
TOW.



WUT THAT
WOULD SLOW
US DOWN!
WHAT IF A
BRITISH
PRIVATEER?



IF ANYTHING LIKE THAT
HAPPENS, WE COULD EASILY
LOOSE AND RUN!
IT'S THE ONLY WAY I
CAN SEE...

ALL RIGHT, MILLSON.
YOUR POINT IS
WELL TAKEN!
LET'S START
TRANSFERRING
THE CARGO!

AND SO, THE PIRATE CREW LAUGHED BACK AND FORTH, SHUFFING THE DUTCH INDULGENCE OF ITS CARGO AND CARRYING IT TO THEIR OWN BARK. EVERY LAST CASH AND BAIREL WAS REMOVED...EVERYTHING OF VALUE...EVERYTHING EATABLE...



WHEN THE MERCHANT WAS COMPLETELY STOPPED, THE PIRATE CAPTAIN BELLOWED MORE ORDERS...



LAY ALOFT AND
FURL THE SAILS!
CLEW UP THE MAIN-
SAIL! LASH AND
SECURE!

THE PIRATE CROW LEAPED INTO THE RIGGING, SPRUNG THE WHO FROM THE SHIP'S SAILS, BUNDLED THEM INTO TIGHT FOLDS, AND LASHED THEM WITH THE YARD ARM GASKETS...



ITS SAILS TIGHTLY FURLED, ITS HOLDS AND DECKS AND LOCKERS STRIPPED CLEAN, THE DUTCH BRIGANTINE WAS NOW A BARREN HELPLESS HULK - A STOUT LINE WAS PASSED OVER ITS BOWSPRIT, THE GRAPPLING HOOKS WERE RELEASED, AND THE PIRATE LEAPED TO THE MAIN DECKING OF THE BRIG.



AND ONCE AGAIN, THE REVELRY AND THE CELEBRATING WAS CUT SHORT BY THE CRY FROM BASTHEAD...



SAIL HO...OFF THE
LANEBOARD NEAR! CAPTAIN!
IT'S A BRITISH
FRIGATE!

ONCE AGAIN, THE SINGING AND THE SHOUTING AND THE CURSING ECHOED ACROSS THE TOSSEING SEA AS THE SHIPWRECKED AND THIRTY-FIVE BRIGS TOWARD THE SHAMMAS...



CAPTAIN MEDFORD SCRAMBLED ON DECK, SHOUTING...



CUT THE BRIGANTINE LOOSE! CUT
STUDDING SAILS! WE'VE GOT TO
RUN FOR IT!

THE SIGHT OF THE ARMED BRITISH PRIVATE BEARING DOWN UPON THEM WAS LIKE A SPARK THAT IGNITED AN EXPLOSION OF PANIC AND CONFUSION AMONG THE PIRATES. THE TOWLINE WAS HACKED THROUGH AND THE BARK LEAPED AHEAD, LEAVING THE BARREN MOUNTAIN FOUNDERING...



BUT THE BRITISH PRIVATEER PERSISTENTLY CLING BEHIND THE PIRATE BARK, SLOWLY CLOSING THE GAP.



AND SO, THAT NIGHT, A LONGBOAT FULL OF SUCCEEDERS WITH MUFFLED GUNS TOWED A PIRATE BARK ACROSS A BLACK SEA...



THE PIRATE BARK, ITS STUDDING SAULS FLYING, CUT SWIFT-LIKE THROUGH THE CHOPPY SEA, LEAVING THE PURLED-SAILED DUTCH BARK FAR BEHIND...



FOR THREE DAYS, THE PRIVATEER CHASED CAPTAIN REDFORD AND HIS PIRATE SHIP. AND THEN THE WIND DIED AND A CALM SET IN. THE DUTCH COURTESYLESSLY, ONLY 8 MILE OR SO AWAY...



WHILE LESS THAN A MILE OFF, A LONGBOAT FULL OF BRITISH SAILORS, TUGGING AND STRAINING AT THEIR OWN MUFFLED GUNS, TOWED THEIR PRIVATEER AFTER THEM.



THE NEXT DAY, THE WIND PICKED UP AGAIN AND THE RUNNING AND PURSUING CONTINUED. IT WAS ON THE FOURTEENTH DAY AFTER THE CHASE HAD BEGUN THAT THE BRITISH FRIGATE FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH THE FLEEING PIRATE VESSEL, AND THE TWO SHIPS LOCKED IN BLOODY COMBAT.



CANNONADE AFTER CANNONADE RIPPED AT EACH VESSEL, SPLINTERING MASTS, SHATTERING HULLS, RIPPING SAILS. AND AS THE TWO SHIPS DRIFTED TOGETHER, FIRE BROKE OUT ON THE FRIGATE.



WITH THE FRIGATE SINKING AND ITS OWN HULL TAKING WATER, THE PIRATE VESSEL LINED AWAY, LEAVING THE SURVIVING BRITISH SAILORS THAT HAD BEEN THROWN CLEAR TO THE MERCY OF THE SEA.



SOMEHOW, THE FIRE REACHED THE BRITISH SHIP'S POWDER MAGAZINE, AND IT EXPLODED IN A BLINDING WHITE ROAR.



A FEW DAYS LATER, CAPTAIN WYFORD, AFTER AN EXAMINATION OF HIS SHIP'S DAMAGES, REPORTED TO HIS CROWN.



IT WAS THE ABANDONED DUTCH BRIGANTINE. IT SAT MOTIONLESS ON THE WINDSWEPT SEA... A BARREN, STRIPPED HULK. BUT A HULK UNDAUNTED BY CANNON SHOT AND RAINING... A GOOD SEAWORTHY VESSEL.



THE CRIPPLED PIRATE SHIP WAS FIRED AND BLAZED UP BRIGHTLY, BURNING WILDLY. THEN THE PIRATE CAPTAIN BELLOWED:



THE GLEEFUL PIRATES SPILLED ON BOARD THE TRIM BRIG THEY'D ABANDONED ALMOST THREE WEEKS BEFORE. NOW IT WAS THEIR SALVATION. SWIFTLY, THEY REMOVED THE BODY FROM THEIR OWN FOUNDERING BARK...



THE CUT-THROATS LEAPED INTO THE RISING, UNTYING THE YARD GASKETS, LOOSING THE FOLDED SAILS AND...



FOR OUT OF THE FURLED SAILS SPILLED RATS... THOUSANDS OF STARVING RATS... STARVING RATS THAT FOR THREE WEEKS HAD SEARCHED THE BARREN SHIP AND FOUND EVERY CASK... EVERY CRACKER BARREL BONE... STARVING RATS THAT HAD CLIMBED INTO THE FURLED SAILS TO SNOW AT THE LATEEN IN AN ATTEMPT TO SATISFY THEIR HUNGER... STARVING RATS THAT HAD STRIPPED THE SAILS TO SHREDS AND NOW SNARLED AND SQUEALED AND BARED THEIR KNIFE-LIKE TEETH IN ANTICIPATION AND SCRAMBLED OVER THE DECKS AND ALONG THE YARDS AFTER THE SCREAMING PIRATES... THEIR FIRST FOOD IN SO VERY LONG...



KISMET

THE AFRICAN NIGHT IS SOFT...THE FOOD IS GOOD...AND YOU SIT ENTRENCHED, TRYING TO ENJOY IT ALL. YOU ARE RICKO THOMAS, SLAYER...MUTINEER...MURDERER...AS YOU LOOK DOWN AT THE BARRACADDERS, THE SLAVE PENS, YOU KNOW NOW HOW A KING MUST FEEL...MASTER OF ALL HE SURVEYS. BUT AMAR SPOILS IT FOR YOU. THE ARAB'S BEARDED, PARCHMENT-LIKE FACE IS LIFELESS...EMOTIONLESS. HIS CALM IN THE COMPANY OF IMPENDING DEATH INVITES YOU...

THIS ISN'T LIKE THE LAST TIME, EH, AMAR? A FEW DAYS AGO, YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT SOON YOU'D SHARE A MEAL WITH ME AGAIN. DID YOU? A...A FINAL MEAL?

ALLAH HAS SAID ALL THINGS CHANGE, NEEDLER THOMAS. A MAN CAN ONLY ACCEPT HIS FATE. IF DOOM REARS HIM, HE CANNOT ESCAPE IT...HE CANNOT HIDE FROM IT!



FATE? THESE ARABS? THEY'RE LIKE WOMEN...SOFT...WAITING FOR LIFE TO SMILE THEM A TUNE. BUT YOU, SLEAZY THOMAS...THE BLOOD RUNS HOT IN YOUR VEINS. YOU DON'T WAIT? YOU DO? THAT'S WHY YOU'RE WHERE YOU ARE NOW.

A MAN CAN ONLY ACCEPT HIS FATE? BAN? A REAL MAN MAKES HIS OWN FATE, AMAR! I TOLD CAPTAIN AMES THAT ONCE! IF HE'D LISTENED, MAYBE HE'D STILL BE ALIVE!



MAYBE? YOU HAVE YOUR HANDS AND A SLAVE GIRL BUBBLING TO REFILL YOUR GLASS. THE WINE YOU'VE DRUNK IS WARM IN YOUR BELLY, AND THERE'S NO HARM IN TALKING NOW. AFTER ALL, THIS IS A BIG DAY IN YOUR LIFE, SLEAZY THOMAS.

YOU...YOU KILLED HIM? CAPTAIN AMES? YOU MURDERED...?

HOW ELSE COULD I HAVE GOTTEN COMMAND OF THE UNICORN? I WANTED HER, SO I TOOK HER. AMES WAS A FOOL!



AMAH HOOD. HE HOLDS NO BRIDGE. AMAH IS A TRUE SON OF ALLAH... A BELIEVER IN RISHMET... DESTINY! YOU REMEMBER BACK TO THAT DAY ABOARD THE UNICORN AS SHE BEAT CLOSE TO THE AFRICAN COAST THAT DAY YOU SEARCHED HER FROM STEW TO STERN, YOU REMEMBER, AS YOU CAME ON DECK...

MISTER THOMAS? WHAT WERE YOU DOING **BELOW**? THIS IS **FOUR** WATCH! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ON THE QUARTER DECK!

I WAS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING! AND YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW WHAT I'VE IN TWO DAYS WE'LL BE AT THE RED POND. THERE'S NO GOLD ABOARD. HOW DO WE BUY SLAVES WITHOUT GOLD?

WE'LL BUY OUR SLAVES, MISTER THOMAS? I'VE BEEN A SLAYER FOR TWENTY YEARS! DO YOU THINK I'D SELL THREE THOUSAND MILES FOR NOTHING? WAIT AND SEE...

WAIT? I HAVE WAITED! I'VE SAILED WITH YOU BEFORE, AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE HIDDEN THE GOLD. IF THERE IS ANY GOLD...



YOU REMEMBER CAPTAIN AMES'S FACE AND THE REALIZATION THAT YOU'D BOAR TOO FAR

I MEAN, CAPTAIN, I TRUST YOU, BUT THE MEN DON'T. THEY BOAR ON FOR SHARES, NO SLAVES, NO SHARES OF PROFITS! I'M WORRIED...

ABOUT FO'S 'LE SCUM? LOOK, THOMAS, I'D AIMED TO RETIRE AND YOU TALKED ME INTO THIS LAST VOYAGE. IF YOU THINK I DON'T INTEND IT TO BRING A FAT PROFIT, YOU'RE DAFT!



SURE YOU TALKED AMES INTO THAT LAST VOYAGE, FOR REASONS OF YOUR OWN. LATER, IN THE PORTS'LE, YOU'D SPOKE TO THE CREW

IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TELLIN' US, THOMAS? THAT THERE'S NO GOLD? ALL RIGHT THEN... WHY SHOULD WE WAIT? LET'S TAKE THE UNICORN NOW

WE'LL TAKE THE UNICORN JUST AS WE PLANNED! BUT WE'LL WAIT...



FOR WHAT? YOU AND YOUR PLANS? HE'S FRICKED US, MANNOSS?

NO WAR TRICKS, BUCKO THOMAS! WE WAIT UNTIL HE BRINGS HIS BASTARD OUT OF HIS HAT AND BOTS IS A THIRPLOAD OF BLACK HOGGY!



IT WASN'T FOR NOTHING THEY CALLED YOU 'BUCKO'. YOUR IRON FIST CRUNCHES FLESH AND BONE, AND THE CREW WAITES. THEY MUTTERED, THEY WAITED, BUT THEY WAITED. TWO DAYS LATER, YOU WERE ON THE STINKING BOTTOM OF THE POND

THERE'S THE BEND AHEAD. AMAH'S STOCKADE IS JUST BEYOND. YOU WILL GO ABOARD WITH ME! THOMAS, ONLY YOU, I DON'T TRUST THE OTHERS!

AYE, AYE, SIR, AND THE GOLD? WE CAN'T BUY SLAVES FROM AMAH WITHOUT IT.



YOU REMEMBER HOW CAPTAIN AMES REACHED INTO HIS COAT AND PULLED OUT HIS TOBACCO POUCH...

GOLD? THERE IS NO GOLD, THOMAS. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING JUST AS GOOD, I CAN SHOW YOU, NOW. THIS TIME, WE DON'T PAY IN GOLD...



THEY LAY ON HIS PALM LIKE GLOVES OF FIRE—LIGHT, PEARLS... THE SIZE OF PIGEON EGGS, YOU'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF JEWELS!

I BOUGHT THESE IN COBA, FOR A **DOBE!** MY LAST VOYAGE WILL BE A **BIGGEST PROFITABLE ONE!** FROM DO YOU UNDERSTAND, THOMAS?

YES... YES... NOW I UNDERSTAND, SIR. **PEARLS** ARE EASY TO CARRY! YOU DIDN'T WANT TO RISK HAVING YOUR **THROAT SLIT** BY ONE OF THE **CREW!** VERY CLEVER!



LATER, WHILE AMAN WENT THROUGH THE BARRACKS OF SKEETES, YOU WERE LAUGHING BEHIND...

I GIVE YOU BREAD AND SALT, MY FRIENDS. MY HOUSE AND ALL THAT IT CONTAINS IS YOURS, WELCOME.

THANK YOU, OLD FRIEND. MAY THIS VISIT BRING BENEFIT TO US BOTH.



THEY WERE BOTH ACTING. NEITHER TRUSTED THE OTHER. YOU NOTED AMAN'S ARMED FOULAH GUARDS, AND YOU KNEW ABOUT THE SPACE OF PISTOLS BENEATH AMAN'S COAT. AND YOU LAUGHED INSIDE BECAUSE YOU KNEW THAT IT WOULD BE YOU WHO WOULD SNEAK IT. MEANWHILE YOU RELAXED.



YOU NEVER DREAMED, THEN, THAT YOU'D BE BACK WITHIN A FEW DAYS. YOU WONDERED IDLY HOW IT WOULD BE TO HOLD A LITTLE KINGDOM LIKE THIS. BUT WHAT YOU WANTED TO SEE WAS SLAVES, AND SOON, YOU DID...

GOOD ENOUGH. THIS ONE WILL BRING A **GOOD PRICE**. I'LL TAKE HIM, AND THAT ONE...



GORAS, FUTOR, MANDWOS: AMAN'S BARRACKS WERE FULL, AND THE CAPTAIN CHOSE THE BEST, PAYING FOR THEM WITH THE PEARLS. YOU LOADED QUICKLY AFTERWARDS, BECAUSE NOW YOU WANTED TO GET AMAN... TO DO WHAT YOU'D PLANNED FOR SO LONG...

SO... YOU ARE ALMOST READY TO **SAIL**, CAPTAIN AMAN. I WOULD BE **HONORED** IF YOU WOULD **REMAIN** FOR A LITTLE WHILE, AS MY **GUESTS!**

WE'VE GOT TO BE **SHEDDING OFF**, AMAN. FROM HERE ON, **TIME IS MONEY!**



CAPTAIN AMAN SEEMED ANXIOUS TOO. YOU REMEMBER THAT NOW...

MY DATE IS **NIGHT!** AMAN! WE SAIL **TONIGHT!** BEFORE MOONRISE. I WANT TO BE **WELL TO SEA** BY **DAWN!**... JUST IN THE EVENT THAT A **REVENGE DUTTEN** SHOULD BE NEARBY...

SO BE IT. GO IN PEACE, THEN, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.



HOW IMPATIENT YOU WERE, RUDDY THOMAS, AS THE UNICORN SLIDED DOWNSTREAM... LIKE A DREAM SHIP... SLOWLY. IT SEEMED LIKE FOREVER. BUT THEN, THERE WAS THE OPEN SEA AHEAD, AND NOW WAS THE TIME, NOW...

QUIET NOW, MEN.

LET ME GIVE 'EM THE **BLADE**, RUDDY...



BUT YOUR PLAN HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED.

BUCKO!
LOOK THERE!
TO STARBOARD
BEARIN' DOWN
AT US!

BLAST IT! A
BRITISH CUTTER!
AND CARRYIN' AT
LEAST TEN CANNON.
WE'LL HAVE TO RUN
FOR IT!

THE CAPTAIN, UNAWARE OF HIS NARROW
ESCAPE FROM DEATH, LISTENED TO YOU
ORDER THE CREW ALOFT!

OUT ALL SAILS!
FULL WIND
ASTERN! HOP
TO IT!

IT'S NO USE, THOMAS!
EVEN WITH ALL SAIL
WE COULDN'T OUT-
RUN HER! HAVE THE
MEN BREAK OUT THE
ANCHOR CHAIN. WE'LL
HAVE TO DUMP THE SLAVES.

NO! WE
CAN'T!
WE CAN'T
GO BACK
WITH AN
EMPTY
HOLD!

WE'LL GO BACK
EMPTY OR
DANCE AT THE
END OF A ROPE!
THE ROYAL
NAVY HAS NO
PATIENCE
WITH SLAVE
SMUGGLERS!
I GAVE YOU AN
ORDER, MISTER
BUEK! BREAK OUT
THE CHAIN.

IT HAD BEEN A ROUGH TWIST OF LUCK, BUT IT
HAD TO BE DONE. NOW THE SLAVES HOWLED AND
CHANTED AND PRAYED TO THEIR HEAVEN BODIES AS
THEY WERE HERDED ON DECK AND SECURED TO THE
ANCHOR CHAIN. THEY KNEW...

MAKE IT QUICK, LADS!

AND AS THE CUTTER FIRED A SHOT ACROSS THE UN-
ICORN'S HOP, THE ANCHOR WAS DROPPED OVER THE SIDE...

...BRASSING A SCREAMING, TWISTING CHAIN OF HUMANITY DOWN INTO THE
SEA WITH IT.

SO? A
SHARK
BAIT?
TWO
MONTHS
AT SEA
AND
WHAT
FOR?

FOR A FORTUNE!
THERE ARE MORE
SLAVES IN AFRICA'S
SHADOWS. WE CAN'T
BUY BUT WE CAN
TAKE IF WE GET OUT
OF THIS. WE'LL GO
BACK FOR 'EM...

YOU GOT OUT OF IT, THE UNICORN HAD TO... BUT THE EVIDENCE WAS GONE, THERE WAS NOTHING ON BOARD TO PROVE YOUR GUILT WHEN THE BRITISH OFFICERS CAME ABOARD. AFTER A WHILE, YOU WERE UNDER WAY AGAIN.

NO BACK? NEVER! I TOLD YOU, MISTER THOMAS, THIS WAS MY LAST VOYAGE! YOU'RE TALKING BULL! IT WOULD BE SURE!

HOT IF WE TOOK HIM BY SURPRISE.



CAPTAIN AMES HAD TURNED AWAY.

I'VE SAID MY FINAL WORD, MISTER THOMAS. WE SAIL FOR HOME.

DO WE, CAPTAIN? THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG.



AND YOU'D PLUNGED THE KNIFE INTO HIS BACK...



THE CAPTAIN FELL. HIS LIFE'S BLOOD RAN RED IN THE SCUFFERS. BUT YOU NEVER NOTICED. YOU LOOKED OVER THE UNICORN AND SHE SEEMED TO LEAP UNDER YOUR FEET. YOURS! AND THE UNICORN WAS GOING TO BE ONLY THE BEGINNING...

THROW HIS BODY OVER THE SIDE! WE'RE GOING BACK UP THE PONGO!



IT WASN'T JUST A CARGO OF SLAVES YOU'D WANTED THEN, WAS IT, BUCCO THOMAS? SUDDENLY YOU SAW YOURSELF AS A KING—WITH AMES'S DOMINION AS YOUR KINGDOM. AS YOU CAME UP THE PONGO, PASSED THE BEND, AND APPROACHED THE STOCKADE, IT SEEMED ALMOST TOO EASY.

HOT EVEN A GUARD AT THE GATE? I'LL GO ASHORE ALONE! AMES WON'T EXPECT ANYTHING! WHEN I'VE FINISHED HIM OFF, I'LL CALL! THAT WILL BE YOUR SIGNAL TO COME ASHORE AND CUT DOWN ANY FOULAN THAT OBJECTS...



BUT AS YOU'D REACHED THE SALENT RIVER BANK, CANNONS BEGAN TO FLASH AND ROAR FROM THE STOCKADE AND RED BALLS CLANGED INTO THE UNICORN—SWATHING HER RIGGING, SIPPING HER HULL.



AND AS THE UNICORN HAD PLUMED AND TURNED, DIVING INTO THE RIVER, YOU'D LOOKED AROUND AT AMAR AND THE RAULAH GUARDS SURROUNDING YOU.

WELCOME, MEESTER TOMAS!
I DIDN'T *BREAK* THAT I
WOULD *SEE* YOU AGAIN, BUT
ALLAH IS GOOD TO ME.
WHERE IS MY FRIEND,
CAPTAIN AMAR?

DEAR? WHAT
WAS IT THIS ALL
ABOUT, AMAR?
WHY'D YOU
DINK THE
UNICORN?



WHY? HAD AMAR KNOWN? HAD HE GUESSED? THE QUESTION DEALT IN YOUR THOUBLES (RAIN, BUT AMAR HADN'T TOLD YOU, INSTEAD, YOU'D BEEN BATHED, GIVEN CLEAN CLOTHES, RED LANYOL. YOU KNEW MOSLEM CUSTOM. THIS MEAL HAD BEEN YOUR LAST. NOW AS YOU SIT, FINISHING YOUR WINE, AMAR SPEARS, INTERRUPTING YOUR REVERIE.

SO...THE CAPTAIN IS *DEAR*? A *PITY*?
I HAD WISHED GREATLY TO *SEE* HIM
ONCE MORE, BUT...IT IS SAID...A
MAN CANNOT *ESCAPE* *KISMET*.
IS IT NOT SO, MEESTER TOMAS?
NOT EVEN YOU.

KISMET? AGAIN,
OH, AMAR, MEAN-
ING IT WAS MY
FATE TO *DIE*
HERE...



EXACTLY,
MEESTER
TOMAS!
GUARDS!

ALL RIGHT? DO YOUR WORSE, YOU
SHITTY FLESH FODDLER, BUT IF I *DIE*
HERE, IT'S BECAUSE I MADE IT WAP-
PEN, ME! *HUCKO* THOMAS! THE
CAP'N WENT WANT TO COME BACK!
I *DID*!



KISMET, FATE...BUT...THAT SAME, SOFT, STUPID
PHILOSOPHER, YOU MAKE YOUR *OWN* FATE, *DON'T* YOU,
HUCKO THOMAS? YOU START TO SAY IT AGAIN BUT AMAR
CLAPS HIS HANDS AND THE GUARD STEPS FORWARD WITH
THE 'GOLD' IN HIS BIG DARK HANDS. AND SUDDENLY,
YOU CAN'T HELP YOURSELF.



YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF DEATH, HUCKO THOMAS! BUT
THE 'GOLD'...THE STRANGLER'S CORD IS SLOW...SO
HOUSHLY SLOW, YOU FIGHT, BUT IT'S NO GOOD.

NO...NO, *DON'T*.

ASH-N-H-N-GH

YES, MY FRIEND?
YES? WHAT *MUST*
ME, *MUST* BE, YOU
WERE *WRONG*? YOU
DID NOT *CHOOSE*
YOUR FATE, THAT
WAS DECIDED FOR
YOU, BY WHI-
WHITER.



AS YOU DIE, AMAR REACHES INTO THE FOLDS OF HIS
ROBE AND BRINGS FORTH THE GLEAMING IRIDESCENT
SHIMMERS, SLIPPING THEM UPON YOUR TWITCHING SLIP-
POCKETING BODY.

...BUT HOW COULD YOU KNOW THAT
THE *TRADER* TO WHOM I TRIED TO
SELL YOUR LATE CAPTAIN'S PEARLS
WOULD LOOK AT THEM AND TELL ME
THEY WERE *WORTHLESS* GLOVES
OF FATE?





LOBLOLLY BOY



In the days of old sailing vessels, a boy beginning his first voyage was called a "loblolly." On a good ship, the taking on of such a green hand was an occasion of skylarking and ribald hazing. If the loblolly showed signs of seasickness (a pronounced green tinge about the gills) he was offered such "wonder drugs" as chewing tobacco or a piece of salt junk. After munching the salt meat, either pork or beef, or chewing the tobacco, the victim's misery was two-fold. Even as he lay limply doubled over the rail, he was the recipient of mock sympathy and further advice as to other "maracle" antidotes. Fortunately, he was invariably *too weak* to heed any more suggestions.

The loblolly's first days of sea duty were full of futile quests ordered by his shipmates. He would be sent to the boson's locker to get some sand oil for the larboard light and green oil for the starboard light. He would be sent to the man at the wheel to get the key to the starboard watch from whence he was to go and "wind it." He would be sent to find Charley Noble and tell him to report to the first mate. (In the seaman's lingo 'Charley Noble' was the pipe of the galley stove. To shoot Charley Noble was to discharge a parcel into the pipe to clear it of soot.) He would be sent to the galley and told to ask the cook for a pailful of fresh steam to prime the donkey engine. Or perhaps he would be told to fetch the key to the keelson. Such credulity is not rare among the uninitiated!

The loblolly soon learned that his captain was not only the ruler in his ship, but also a father, physician, preacher, and even judge to both crew and passengers. When the Master, the Old Man, was on deck, the weather side of the quarter-deck belonged to him, and the moment he appeared, the officer of the watch left that side and went over to the leeward (pronounced *lee-ward*). The loblolly learned that the captain was always the last into a small boat and the first out of it. And

when a seaman was summoned to the captain's cabin, he removed his cap and dropped it to the deck just outside the door.

The neophyte manner learned that it was a breach of etiquette for a seaman to lock his sea chest while on board his ship. If he did so, when he returned to the forecabin from his watch on deck, he would find that the cover had been nailed down.

If the seaman was in either the British or United States navies, he would wear a scarf of black silk; originally a mark of mourning for the death of Lord Nelson. He would learn to keep his 'Lord Rodney' braided properly . . . that being the old sea term for his pigtail. If he were in the Royal Navy, he would be exposed to a form of canned meat called 'Harriet Lane', . . . deceptively named after a murdered girl whose body was cut up and hidden in a box. Then there was a mixture more aptly called 'salt horse', beef or pork pickled in brine.

The loblolly soon succumbed to some of the superstitions of the sea, or at least he respected them in the presence of his older shipmates. Many seamen believed that the ship's bell would toll just as she was sinking, even if it were securely lashed in place. Paring the nails or cutting hair during a calm was believed to coax good winds, during a blow such acts were considered *bad omens*. If a shark followed the ship, it was regarded as an ill omen . . . especially if there were sick on board. It was believed that a shark was able to scent a victim and would follow for miles a ship that bore a dead body. And to lose the ship's colors; to pass a flag through the rungs of a ladder, or through a window, would bring ill fortune to ship and men.

Through it all, the veteran seaman and tender loblolly offered a sailor's prayer for a day of rest—"Come day, go day, God send Sunday."

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the SHELL GAME

SLOWLY, YOU CLAMBER OVER THE GUNWALE OF THE SLOOP AND STEP SINGLERLY DOWN THE RUNGS OF THE IRON LADDER THAT REACHES ITS RUSTY LEGS INTO THE LAPPING BLUE-GREEN WATER. YOU CAN HEAR THE RHYTHMIC THUMP, THUMP OF THE AIR COMPRESSOR ON DECK, PUMPING LIFE-GIVING OXYGEN THROUGH THE RUBBER HOSE THAT RUNS TO YOUR DIVING HELMET. YOU CAN FEEL THE HEAT OF THE BLINDING SUN OVERHEAD, BAKING YOUR BARE FLESH. YOU LOOK DOWN AT THE ANNIHILATED RUBBER FLIPPERS ON YOUR FEET. AND THEN YOU STARE INTO THE MYSTERIOUS DEPTHS BELOW AND YOU KNOW THAT THIS IS YOUR LAST TRY, JOHN DROWNY... THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO FIND YOUR DREAM...



THE BLUE-GREEN DEPTHS CHANGE AND DARKEN INTO PURPLE GREY AS YOU DESCEND, FILING THROUGH MYRIADS OF BAILY-COLORED FISH AND SHIFTING, SWIRLING PATCHES OF UNDERSEA VEGETATION. DOWN TOWARD THE TREACHEROUS CORAL REEF... DOWN TOWARD YOUR DREAM...



WHEN DID YOUR DREAM BEGIN, JOHN ORDWAY? DO YOU REMEMBER? DO YOU REMEMBER THE CLOCKMATS AND MAPS AND SEA LOGS OF LONG-FORGOTTEN VOYAGES YOU FOUND HIDDEN AWAY ON THE DUSTY SHELVES OF THE SHIPPING CONCERN WHERE YOU WORKED? DO YOU REMEMBER PORING OVER THEM... OVER THE OLD ACCOUNTS OF SHIP-WRECKS... AND FINDING **THAT ONE RECORD... AGAIN AND AGAIN**?

HERE'S **ANOTHER** MENTION OF THE **MARIA SANTOS**. "YES... OFF THE FLORIDA KEYS... RICHARD DE LUSAN SENT THE SPANISH GALLEON TO THE BOTTOM OFF RAZOR REEF. THE GALLEON CARRIED PLATE... **GOLD**."



DO YOU REMEMBER THE TRIPS YOU TOOK ON WEEK-ENDS... OUT OF MIAMI... DOWN TO THE KEYS... AND HOW THE DREAM GREW STRONG AS YOU VERIFIED OLD LEGENDS... QUESTIONED THE LOCAL INHABITANTS?

THAT'S **RIGHT!** MY **OWN WIFE** ONCE FOUND A PIECE OF EIGHT... AFTER A **STORM**... WASHED UP ON THE **BEACH!**

THERE IS A MAN IN **PORT BELLO** WHO HAS A **DOUBLOON** IN HIS POSSESSION.



...AND HOW YOUR DREAM ALMOST FAGED WHEN YOU DISCOVERED HOW MUCH IT WOULD **TAKE** TO MAKE YOUR DREAMCOME **TRUE**?

CHARTER MY SLOOP? **DIVING?** THAT'LL BE A **HUNDRED DOLLARS** A **DAY**, MISTER, AND YOU SUPPLY THE **EQUIPMENT?**

DIVING EQUIPMENT? **HELMETS** **COMPRESSORS** **LIFELINE** **RIBS?** IT'LL COST AT LEAST **FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS** FOR EVERYTHING YOU'LL **NEED**, MISTER...



DO YOU REMEMBER HOW THE DREAM HELD YOU, JOHN ORDWAY... HOW SLEEP BECAME AN IMPOSSIBILITY AS YOU TOSSED AND TURNED AT NIGHT... HOW MEALS HAD NO APPEAL... HOW WORK BECAME A TORTURE? DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU CHECKED AND CROSS-CHECKED, HAUNTING THE LIBRARIES, ADDING, ACCUMULATING, CULLING BITS OF INFORMATION HERE AND THERE...?

...DE LUSAN **WAS** A **BUGABOO!** THERE IS SUCH A NAME! THE **MARIA SANTOS** **WAS** **SUNK** OFF THE **FLORIDA COAST!** AND THERE'S **NO RECORD** OF IT **EVER BEING FOUND!** THEN IT MUST **STILL** **BE THERE... UNDER RAZOR REEF.**



...HOW YOU STOOD ON THE **GLAZING SAND** AND GAZED OUT OVER THE **BLUE EXPANSE** TO THE **ROLLING WHITE CAPS** THAT **HAD RAZOR REEF**...

IT'S **THERE!** IT'S **GOT** TO BE **THERE!** **THOUSANDS** AND **THOUSANDS** OF **DOLLARS** WORTH OF **DREAM**, **PEARLS**, **PIECES** OF **EIGHT**, **DOUBLOONS**, **JEWELS**... **SILVER** AND **GOLD** PLATE! I'LL **FIND** IT! I **MUST!**



YOU WERE SETTING ON IN YEARS, JOHN ORDWAY! LIFE WAS PASSING YOU BY! YOU WERE NOTHING BUT A **CRAB** IN A SEA OF **ORDINARY MEN**... A **DESPERATE** DREAM OF YOU REMEMBER HOW **HONESTLY** DIED FOR THE PROSPECT OF **FINDING** YOUR DREAM.



THE COMPANY'S MONEY! **FIFTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS!** **HOT** WHAT I **NEED!** THEY'LL **NEVER** SUSPECT I'LL **JUGGLE** THE **BOOKS**... **COVER** IT UP AND AFTER MY **VACATION**... **RETURN** IT!

YOU BECAME A **THIEF** FOR YOUR DREAM, JOHN CROWLEY. REMEMBER? YOU **STOLE FIFTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS** AND WITH IT, YOU LEFT ON YOUR VACATION. TWO WEEKS... TWO WEEKS TO FIND A TREASURE HOARDED AND GUARDED BY RAZOR REEF FOR CENTURIES.



SIX DAYS, JOHN CROWLEY, SIX DAYS TO FIND YOUR DREAM. NOT VERY LONG, IS IT? DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOUR HEART POUNDED IN YOUR CHEST AS THE SLOOP DROPPED ANCHOR OVER THE SPOT YOU MARKED ON THE CHARTS...?



DO YOU REMEMBER THAT **FIRST DIVE**, JOHN CROWLEY, PLUNGING INTO THE ROLLING WATER...KICKING DOWN...DOWN TO THE SHELL-FISH AND BEARDED-COVERED REEF...SEARCHING THE MURKY SLOOM...SEARCHING FOR YOUR DREAM...?



YOU BOUGHT SUPPLIES, RENTED EQUIPMENT, AND THEN YOU COUNTED WHAT WAS LEFT AND CHARTERED THAT SLOOP.



FIFTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS! THAT'S THE PRICE OF YOUR DREAM, **JOHN!** THAT'S HOW MUCH YOU **STOLE!** THAT'S HOW MUCH YOUR FIRM WILL BE **WANTING BACK!** YOU LOOKED HARD THAT FIRST DAY, DIDN'T YOU, SKIMMING OVER THE CORAL, DOUBLING BACK...

NO EVEN IF! PERHAPS I'M **WRONG!** PERHAPS THE CURRENTS CARRIED IT **OFF** THE REEF... DOWN INTO THE MUD... AND IT'S **BURIED...**



GOD BLESS THAT LIFELINE! YOU WERE, **ER...** **JOHN!** THREE SHARP TUGS AND YOU WERE YANKED UPWARD AND OUT OF REACH OF THOSE CRUSHING, SHARK-LIKE TENTACLES!



THE FIFTH DAY, TOO, PASSED WITH NO LUCK, AND NOW THE SIXTH IS ALMOST OVER. YOU'RE ON YOUR LAST GIVE... YOUR LAST TRY... YOUR LAST CHANCE TO FIND YOUR DREAM.

PLEASE... PLEASE BE HERE THIS TIME. I... I'VE GOT TO GIVE BACK THAT MONEY. PLEASE...



DID YOU REMEMBER THE CREATURE THAT TRIED TO KEEF YOU FROM YOUR DREAM, JOHN?

SOMETHING DARK DOWN THERE!
SOMETHING... SSSS LORD!
AN OCTOPUS!



THE DAYS SLIPPED BY TWO...THREE, YOU GREW NEARLY EXHAUSTED... AND YET YOU **DID NOT FIND YOUR DREAM.** THE FOURTH DAY WAS RUINED BY A SUDDEN SQUALL THAT CHURNED THE SEA ABOVE THE REEF INTO A FROTHY MOUNTAINOUS MONSTER.

SORRY MR. ORDER, I'M TAKIN' NO CHANCES OF GETTIN' MY ROLL OUT OF THE REEF, WE'RE READIN' IN!

WASTED! A WHOLE DAY WASTED!



SUDDENLY YOU SEE IT... AN OPENING IN THE CORAL... LIKE A DOORWAY INTO AN UNDERSEA ROOM, YOU GLISE THROUGH...

TRE...THE GALLEON!
THERE IT IS!



THE THREE-CENTURY-OLD HULK LIES IN THE CORAL TOMB THAT TIME HAS ERECTED AROUND IT. IT LIES WITH ITS ROTTING MASTS AND SPARS...ITS EXPOSED RIBS AND TORN PLANKS...LIKE A SKELETON...SILENT IN ITS UNDERSEA GRAVE. AND NOW YOU ARE KICKING OVER ITS BARNACLED AND PLANT-COVERED DECK.



PULLING YOUR AIR HOSE AND LIFELINE DOWN AFTER YOU, YOU DROP INTO THE DARKNESS. LIGHTING YOUR LAMP, FINGERING ITS BEAM AROUND YOU... AND THEN



AND IN YOUR EAGERNESS, YOU PLUNGE YOUR HANDS INTO THE MOUNTAINS OF GOLD COIN...YOUR FEET SLIPPING IN THE SLUDGE...GRIDDING IN THE SLIME...SLIDING TOWARD THE HULKING MASS BEHIND YOU.



YOU KIP AW... THE ROTTED DECK PLANKS...PEER INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE BULKHEADS. EAGERLY...THE SWEAT ROLLING DOWN YOUR FACE...YOUR HOT BREEDY BREATH CLOUDING YOUR VISOR-GLASS.



YOU FALL UPON THE ROTTING CHESTS SPILLING OUT THEIR FORTUNES OF DOUBLOONS AND JADE AND FLAT-CUT RUBIES AND ORIENTAL PEARLS AND BLUE AND WHITE AMETHYSTS AND PIECES OF FIGHT...



AND AS THE GIANT SEA GLAM...FOUR FEET ACROSS AND WEIGHING HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF POUNDS...CLOSES ITS HUGE JAW-SHELLS ON YOUR LEGS...YOU SCREAM...A PIERCING SCREAM THAT FILLS YOUR DIVING HELMET AND RUPTURES YOUR OWN EARDRUMS.



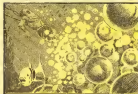
SLOWLY, RELENTLESSLY, THE MIGHTY MONSTER CLAMPS ITS GIANTIC VIDE-LIKE SPELDS CLOSED, BRINDING BONE... CRUSHING AND TEARING FLESH AND MUSCLE... YOU PULL... TUG... DESPERATELY TRYING TO FREE YOURSELF.



YOU YANK AT YOUR LIFE-LINE... ONCE... TWICE... THREE TIMES... THEN YOU SLIP INTO THE BLACKNESS AND THE PAIN IS GONE...



A VIOLENT TUG WRENCHES YOU CLEAR OF THE IMPRISONING GIANT SEA CLAM AND BURLLES OF ESCAPING AIR MIX WITH THE REDISH-BLACK STREAM OF BLOOD THAT SPENS FORTH. YOU'RE DRAGGED UPWARD... ACROSS THE JAGGED PLANK EDGES... SCRAPING ALONG THE RAZOR-SHARP CORAL... LIKE A LIFELESS PUPPET ON A STRING...



NAUSICA SAYS YOU... BILE ERUPTS FROM YOUR MOUTH THE WHITE HOT NERVES OF PAIN SPEAR THROUGH YOUR BODY... THREATEN TO EXPLODE YOUR TORTURED BRAIN... BLACKNESS BEGINS TO CLOSER IN...



ABOVE THE REEF, THE SLOOP RIGGS EASILY. ON ITS DECK, THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CREW RECEIVE THE SIGNAL...



THEY BRING YOUR LIMP BODY OVER THE BURNHALE OF THE SLOOP AND SEE THE RAW RED STUMPS OF YOUR LEGS AND THEY KNOW THAT IT IS TOO LATE... THAT YOU ARE DEAD! THEN, ONE OF THE CREWMEN PRIES OPEN YOUR TIGHT FIST... AND POINTS TO THE GLITTERING COINS...



E.C. WENT TO SEA IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER NEW TREND...



AND WE CAME UP WITH...

SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...

PIRACY

**NOW YOU SEARCH
FOR IT!**

BUT IF YOU *CAN'T FIND PIRACY*
AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU
CAN *SUBSCRIBE!* JUST FILL OUT
THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER
WITH *ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF
CENT* (THAT'S ONE BUCK, LAND-
LUBBERS!), TO:

THE SEASIDE EDITORS OF
PIRACY
ROOM 1046
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THE DIVE



Fledgling Diver Harry Mason stood his ground firmly, legs parted, hands on hips smartly, waiting for the crewmen to finish bolting on the huge iron helmet to the chest support of his metal breastplate. As the last screw met contact, all outward sounds died away. A rhythmic thumping took the place of the normal everyday world, telling him that precious oxygen was filtering in through his air-hose. The deck officer now thumped him twice on the helmet and motioned that the time to submerge was at hand.

He walked towards the railing and grabbed hold of the guide ladder, making certain that his life-line was free and untangled under him. Another thump on his helmet and he was stepping down into the green-blue water below. He sunk like a stone, his feet suddenly very light and tingling but actually weighed down to plummet him towards the very bottom.

The light of day grew somber, darkening into a weird shimmer with each downward speeding inch. Gaily-colored flecks changed to gray wheel patterns that mingled with the bluish-tinted bubbles escaping from his air-hose. His muscles tightened under the increased pressure while his lungs heaved deeply, sucking in fresh oxygen being pumped in from above. Droplets of perspiration beaded his forehead and trickled down his face. His entire body was drenched in sweat. But he knew this clammy feeling of helplessness was due to his cramped, uncomfortable position inside the suit heightened by his tension and inexperience.

But his objective was clear. The huge sea anchor that now loomed up towards him like an eerie spectre from the past lay at the bottom of his descent. All he had to do was tie his spare cable line to it and have it pulled topside.

It seemed easy—it LOOKED easy, but Harry Mason knew that death lurked here. There were other dangers besides the always

constant threat of accidents. Oxygen-intoxication, for instance—a sudden change in the oxygen content being pumped to a diver frequently caused by a defective valve—could produce a dilation of the heart if heavy weights were lifted under-water. Or if the proper pressure failed in the suit—a perilous lower than the water pressure outside—he could be crushed into jelly. Or if too much oxygen came in, his suit would puff up shooting him to the top to dash his brains out under an iron hull of some ship above. Or if none of these things happened, there was lathom-deafness to worry about—pressure affecting a man's eardrums often accompanied by sinus pains worse than any torture.

So Mason went about his job with the utmost caution, yanking at the cable line only when he was finished. The huge sea anchor budged in angry protest as the line about it grew taut, then wrenched free out of its bed of mud and glided towards the surface pulled up from above. The diver rose slowly behind it, stopping now and then to rest. The greatest danger of all in a dive was to fall prey to the terrible bends—bubbles of nitrogen that formed in a man's blood at deep pressures and had to be shrunk to microscopic size and eventually diluted by the body's natural processes before ascent could be completed.

All these obstacles carefully averted, Harry Mason reached the top and was helped back on deck. Moments later, he stood free and clear of his gear, puffing gratefully on a cigarette. The deck officer shouted a command and the sea anchor dropped from the winch that held it, sinking back into the depths below.

"Very good, Mason," he said, facing the diver. "Tomorrow you'll swallow sea-water." Mason nodded soberly, saluted, and turned away from his superior to look past the gym window of the Diving School and the water-filled diving bell he had just left. There—outside, not more than a few hundred yards away, stretched the deep blue sea—waiting.

A FITTING END

THERE WAS A TENSION HOVERING OVER THE BRITISH PRIVATE **SEA KILL**...AN AURA OF IMMINENT VIOLENCE THAT EVERY LIMBY SAILOR ABOARD COULD FEEL IN HIS BONES. IT HUNG OVER THE PROUD SQUARE-RIGGER LIKE AN INVISIBLE, SMOTHERING SHROUD. IT HAD SETTLED DOWN UPON THE SHIP EVEN BEFORE SHE'D GLIDED FROM HER BERTH AT PORTSMOUTH, WHEN FIRST A CERTAIN TULLER, ITTUBORN TAR AND HIS SNORING, ARROGANT, YOUNG SKIPPER HAD LAID EYES UPON EACH OTHER, AND THE TENSION HAD MOUNTED DAY BY DAY, AS THE BAD BLOOD BETWEEN FO'CASTLE HAND **JACK ROARK** AND SHIP'S CAPTAIN **EDMOND DRUMMOND** SEETHED AND BUBBLED AND GREW HOT IN THEIR VEINS, AN EXPLOSION WAS BOUND TO COME... IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME...

JACK ROARK STARED AFTER THE CAPTAIN WITH HATE AND LOATHING AS HE TURNED AND WENT BELOW. **SEN MARTIN**, HIS SHIPMATE, FOLLOWED HIS GAZE...

IT'S MORE THAN CAP'N **DRUMMOND** YOU HATE, **JACK**! IT'S AS THOUGH YOU HATE THE VERY **SEA ITSELF**!

THE **SEA**...ARE I DO HATE THE **SEA**! AND WITH GOOD REASON, **SEN**! THE **SEA** TOOK MY FATHER AND MY BROTHER.



GO EASY, **JACK**, LAD. OR YOU'LL BE UP BEFORE THE ADMIRALTY WHEN WE GET BACK!

HAVE THE ADMIRALTY AND THE WHOLE KING'S NAVY FOR THAT MATTER! NO MAN HAS EVER STRUCK ME BEFORE AND GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT, **SEN**!

THE CREW WILL GET NO GOOD RATIONS FOR A WEEK, AND THEY CAN THANK **ROARK'S** IMPUDENCE FOR THAT!



...AND YET YOU FOLLOWED THE **SEA**—JOINED THE NAVY? WHY?

I'M FOLLOWING A DREAM, **SEN**—SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING I'LL PROBABLY NEVER FIND! IT'S A LONG STORY THAT BEGAN AT **SEA** THIRTY-TWO YEARS AGO...



I WAS *SEVEN* THEN AND MY YOUNGER BROTHER, CHARLES, WAS *FIFTEEN*. MY FAMILY LIVED IN *GLASGOW* AND AFTER ANOTHER DIED OF THE *PLAGUE* THERE, FATHER DECIDED TO BRING US BACK TO *ENGLAND*.

"WE BOARDED PASSAGE ON THE *BURN BOMBAR* AND WE HELD OUR BREATH ACROSS THE *MEDITERRANEAN*, SOUNDING FOR HOME... *LIVERPOOL*. THAT IS, ONE DAY, WE WERE ON DECK WITH MY FATHER, WHEN HE PULLED SOMETHING FROM HIS POCKET."

"DO YOU SEE HOW I HAVE *GOT* THIS *GOLD CROWN*, MY DADDY. BUT IT IS *SOOON* A WAY THAT NO OTHER *HAIKERS* COULD FIT TOGETHER *SO PERFECTLY*? AND NOW I HAVE DRILLED A *HOLE* IN EACH *HALF* AND SLIPPED A *CHAIN* THROUGH..."

"FATHER MUST HAVE HAD SOME PREMONITION OF *DISASTER* FOR I REMEMBERED THE LOOK IN HIS EYES AS HE SLIPPED FIRST ONE CHAIN WITH HALF THE *SPLIT CROWN* AROUND MY NECK AND THEN THE SECOND CHAIN WITH THE OTHER HALF AROUND MY YOUNGER BROTHER'S NECK."

"IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME, JACK... ALWAYS TAKE CARE OF YOUR BROTHER. *STAY TOGETHER ALWAYS!*" BUT, IF YOU SHOULD EVER BE *PARTED*, YOU'LL ALWAYS KNOW EACH OTHER BY THESE *HALF-CROWNS*."

"HARDLY HAD THOSE WORDS SPIELLED FROM MY FATHER'S MOUTH, THAN A MUFFLED ROAR ECHOED OVER THE CHOPPY WATERS AND A BLACK IRON BALL SCREAMED DOWN UPON OUR BARK, SPLINTERING THE MIZZEN MAST."

"*BARBARY PIRATES* THEY WERE... FIERCE AND MORE-LESS! THEY BARRED OUR DECKS WITH FIVE POUNDERS AS THEY BORE DOWN UPON US, SHATTERING OUR HULL, KILLING AND MAIMING..."

"*LATEEN-RIGGED SLOOPS? PIRATES!*"

"OUR BARK WAS A SCENE OF UTTER CONFUSION AND PANIC AS THE PIRATE SLOOP'S DRUNG ALONGSIDE US AND THE BLOOD-CRAZED PLUNDERERS LEAPED ABOARD. MEN SCREAMED AS CUTLASSES HACKED INTO FLESH, DEAD AND DYING STAINED OUR DECK BOARDS CRIMSON. SOMEHOW, IN THE TERRIFIED MILLING OF STRUGGLING HUMANITY, MY YOUNGER BROTHER, CHARLES, WAS SEPARATED FROM US."

"CHARLES? CHARLES?"

"OH, DADDY! *BABBY* WHERE IS HE?"

"FATHER PUSHED ME BEYOND THE CAPSTAN AND PLUNGED INTO THE MILE OF FLASHING KNIVES AND SWIRLING SWORDS AND SHRIERS OF PAIN, SEARCHING FOR MY LOST YOUNG BROTHER. I COULDN'T THERE, A TERRIFIED SEVEN-YEAR-OLD, GETTING MY FIRST VIEW OF BARTON, SAVAGE MURDER."



"THE SARGES SPARED ONLY THE WOMEN AND ONE - GREEN. THEY HERDED THEM BACK ONTO THEIR OWN SLOOPS, INTENDING TO SELL THEM ALL INTO SLAVERY. I CROUGHT A GLIMPSE OF MY YOUNG BROTHER CARLIES BEING CARRIED BY A PARTICULARLY HIDEOUS-GHAST OF A MAN. HE WAS SCREAMING HYSTERICALLY."



"I VAGUELY REMEMBER CLINGING TO A FLOATING SPUR FOR LONG, LONG HOURS UNTIL A BRITISH MERCHANT SHIP RESCUED BY AND PICKED ME UP."

AND SO, I'VE HAD A DREAD OF THE SEA EVER SINCE THEN, MEN, BUT I'VE MADE IT A CAREER IN HOPES OF SOMEDAY FINDING MY YOUNG BROTHER. WHAT MAKES IT SO DIFFICULT IS THAT HE WAS SO YOUNG! HIS NAME IS PROBABLY DIFFERENT! MY ONLY CHANCE IS THE HALF-CROWN.



"I SAW THE HOPELESSLY OUTNUMBERED CREW OF THE JONKAY DROP LIKE FLIES, ONE BY ONE. I SAW MY FATHER CANTER TOWARDS ME, SCREAMING BLOOD, A OUT-LASS IN HIS CREST."



"I SAW HIM DIE, SCARCELY SIX FEET FROM WHERE I HUG."

"THEY SET THE JONKAY AFIRE AND SAILED AWAY. I CROFT, DAZED AND FRIGHTENED, FROM MY HIDING PLACE, STUMBLED THROUGH THE FLAMES, AND LEAPED OVER THE SIDE AND INTO THE SEA."



ONCE, I MET A MAN IN LONDON WHO THOUGHT HE'D SEEN SOMEONE WEARING A HALF-CROWN LIKE THIS ABOUT HIS NECK. A SLAVE IN CUBA. THAT'S WHY I JOINED THE NAVY, I'VE GOT TO GET THERE! I MUST KNOW IF IT'S CHARLES! I

ROBERT! GET ALOFT! TWO MAN BEHIND MY SHIP WILL STAND IDLE AND GASP LIKE A SILENT WOMAN!



SEAMAN ROARK IGNORED CAPTAIN DRUMMOND'S CHEERING WORDS! THE FURIOUS SKIPPER GRABBED THE TAY'S SHOULDER, SPINNING HIM AROUND...

"YOU HEAR ME, SAILOR? I SAID I DON'T LIKE YOU STANDIN' AROUND IDLE. GABIN' LIKE A WOMAN!"

"SEE IF YOU LIKE ME HITTING LIKE A MAN, CAPT."



ROARK PROTESTED:

"YOU CAN'T DO THAT! YOU CAN'T PUNISH THE WHOLE CREW FOR WHAT I DID!"

"BOS'N PIPE ALL HANDS ON DECK!"



THE CAPTAIN SPUN OUT SAVAGELY WITH THE CAT-O'-NINE TAILS HE HELD IN HIS HAND, STIMMING ROARK ACROSS THE FACE.

"I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR INSOLENCE, ROARK..."



ROARK'S FIST EXPLODED AGAINST THE PRIVATE COMMANDER'S JAW...



...AND WHEN THE RED FILM OF RAGE HAD CLEARED FROM THE SHORT-SEA-MAN'S EYELINE, SAW HIS CAPTAIN SPRAWLED UPON THE DECK, GRAPLING UP AT HIM WITH FURY AND HATE...

"YOU'LL SUFFER FOR THIS, ROARK! I'LL HAVE EVERY TAY ON BOARD PUT TO TEN LASHES, AND THEY CAN THANK YOU FOR IT! YOU'LL KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE HATED."



THE CREW OF THE SEA GULL SCURRIED DOWN FROM THE RIGGING AND POINED TOPSIDE FROM BELOW AT THE SOUND OF THE SERRIL BOW'S PIPE. THEY LISTENED TO THE CAPTAIN'S SENTENCE... THEN CAME AN OBVIOUS GROWLING, BUT THE MEN STOOD FAST IN THE FACE OF THE OFFICER'S GAINS.

"...AND YOU CAN REMEMBER WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS WHEN YOU'RE NURSING THE SORE GASHES ON YOUR BACKS. MEN! KEEP SAYING, 'ROARK DID THIS TO ME.'"

"YOU'RE A MADMAN, DRUMMOND... AN OVERBOARDING TFRANT..."



BUT AS THE CAPTAIN RAISED THE WHIP TO STRIKE AGAIN, ROARK SNATCHED IT FROM HIS HAND.

"YOU SWINE? NOW LET'S SEE HOW YOU LIKE THE TASTE OF YOUR OWN LASH."



...AND BEFORE THE SEA BULL'S ASTONISHED OFFICERS COULD STOP HIM, SEAMAN ROARK LASHED THE CAPT-O-NINE ACROSS THE CAPTAIN'S OWN SURPRISED FACE...



IN ANSWER TO CAPTAIN DRUMMOND'S SHRIeking COMMAND, THE NERVOUS OFFICERS POURED A VOLLEY OF SHOTS INTO THE RUSHING CREW...

THAT'S IT! NOW THEY'LL KNOW WHO GIVES THE ORDERS ON THIS SHIP!



THEN THE ANGRY SEAMAN SPUN AROUND, SHOUTING AT THE CREW WHILE THE OFFICERS HESITATED, UNCERTAIN AS TO WHAT TO DO.

ARE YOU MEN?? ARE YOU GOING TO LIVE ON YOUR KNEES? YOU'RE FREE ENGLISHMEN! THAT MEANS YOU'RE FREE EVERYWHERE... EVEN ON THE HIGH SEAS...

SHOOT HIM DOWN! DON'T STAND THERE LIKE IDIOTS! SHOOT!



THREE MEN FELL DEAD, RIFLE BULLETS IN THEIR FLESH. A WAVE OF ANGER FURY SWEEPED OVER THE SEAMEN. NOW THEY CHARGED THEIR OFFICERS, FEARFUL OF ANOTHER VOLLEY IF THEY COULD BE LOAN.

AT EMILIOS...THE MURDERERS!



THE AIR OF TENSION THAT HAD HUNG OVER THE SEA BULL HAD NOW BECOME A RAGING VIOLENCE AS DIRKS, FLASHED FROM BELTS, PLUNGED INTO SOFT BODIES... BELABORING FISTS, WRINGED FROM THE BRAWLES, CRACKED SKULLS, AND RIFLES, RAISED POINT-BLANK, BLASTED SKIN AND BONE...



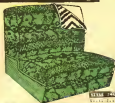
LOOK THERE ABOARD THE STARBOARD BEAM

AYE, A SAIL AND ONE OF OURS, I'D SAY IF THEY SAVED US, WE'LL ALL HAND!

LET'S GO, JACK!

GO. GO ON WITHOUT ME, WITH MY MY DADS AT SEA AND OVER.

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LEOPARD-COWHIDE DESIGN



ITEM #001

Go to Zebra & Snake Design Pattern Plastic can be used on higher tops. (Color change depending on the color of the seat.)
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ITEM #002

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☐ Set of Front & Rear \$5.00 ☐ I will pay cash

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ASSUMED ACTUAL SIZE



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Send money for complete set of pens to: Penmaster, Inc.

ENgrave THE NAME ON ALL 3 PENS (PRINT)

SEND TO (NAME)

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the lubricating qualities of Moly, the "greasy" wonder metal with the friction-reducing properties of Vermodene, the mineral product whose particles expand under heat (Up to 50 times original size).

Just insert Power Seal one of the tube into your motor's cylinders through the spark plug openings. It will spread over pistons, piston rings and cylinders with its rosin engine heat and a well PLATE every surface with a smooth, shiny, resilient film that never wears off! No amount of pressure can scrape it off. No amount of heat can burn it down. It fills the cracks, scratches and weariness caused by engine wear. It closes the gap between worn piston rings and cylinders with an automatic self-expanding seal that stops oil pumping, stops gas blow-by and restores compression. No more piston slapping, no more engine knocking. You get more power, speed, mileage.

This powerful plating is self-lubricating too for Moly, the greasy metal lubricant, reduces friction as nothing else can! It is the only lubricant substantiated enough to be used in 10-5 motor engine plants and as engine oil never drains down, never leaves your engine dry. Even when your car has been standing for weeks, even in colder weather, you can start it in a flash because the lubrication is in the critical spot! That's why you'll need amazingly little oil, too. (I get hundreds, even thousands of more miles per quart.

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You don't risk a penny. Prove to yourself that Power Seal will make your car run like new. Put it in your engine on 30 days. Free! That if you are not getting better performance out of your car than you thought possible—if you have not stopped oil burn up—and have not increased gas mileage—return the empty tube and get your money back in full. Power Seal is absolutely harmless. It comes from the finest oil in any way. It can only preserve and protect your motor.



POWER SEAL MAKES WORK OUT TALK ENGINE RUN LIKE NEW

Here are the Test Engineer's recorded figures showing the exceptional increase in compression obtained on a 1916 De Soto car that had run for 99,000 miles. Just the POWER SEAL increased pop and power, reduced gas consumption, cut oil burning nearly 10%.

| | Cyl. 1 | Cyl. 2 | Cyl. 3 | Cyl. 4 | Cyl. 5 | Cyl. 6 |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| BEFORE | 90 lbs. | 90 lbs. | 102 lbs. | 90 lbs. | 80 lbs. | 100 lbs. |
| AFTER | 102 lbs. | 102 lbs. | 102 lbs. | 102 lbs. | 102 lbs. | 102 lbs. |

BEST INVESTMENT WE EVER MADE, SAYS DRIVER-OWNER

We simply started the POWER SEAL per instructions and made no other repairs or adjustments. Compression readings were taken before and after and showed a big improvement in both runs. As a result the engine started a lot more pop and power which was especially noticeable on hills. What impressed us more was the great reduction in oil consumption. In one week we've actually been saving a quart a day and figure we have saved \$16.30 in oil alone since the POWER SEAL was applied a month ago. In the other car, oil consumption was cut practically in half. We have also been getting better gas mileage. All in all, POWER SEAL turned out to be just about the best investment we ever made. It paid for itself in one week and has been saving money for us ever since. In our thinking of postponing the cost of major overhauls that would have cost more if money. You'll Love. Delightful M. Y.

SEND NO MONEY

Simply send the coupon and your Power-Seal coupon will be sent to you in under 48 HOURS plus postage and handling charges. Or, to save the postage and handling charges, simply enclose full payment with the coupon. For 6-cylinder cars, order the Regular Size, only \$4.95. For 8-cylinder cars, order the Jumbo Size, \$9.95. Power Seal is now available only by mail from us. Send the coupon to us now.

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"Now doing Radio and
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